

109TH CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION

# S. RES. 74

Designating March 8, 2005, as “International Women’s Day”.

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## IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

MARCH 8, 2005

Mr. BIDEN (for himself, Mrs. CLINTON, Mr. LUGAR, Mr. KOHL, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. LAUTENBERG, Ms. STABENOW, Mrs. BOXER, Mr. BAYH, Ms. LANDRIEU, Mr. JOHNSON, Mr. JEFFORDS, Mr. LEVIN, Mr. FEINGOLD, Mr. DODD, Mr. SARBANES, Mr. CORZINE, Mr. KERRY, Mr. OBAMA, Mr. SALAZAR, Mr. KENNEDY, Ms. MIKULSKI, Mrs. LINCOLN, Mr. HATCH, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, and Mr. REID) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to

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## RESOLUTION

Designating March 8, 2005, as “International Women’s Day”.

Whereas all over the world, women are contributing to the growth of economies, participating in the world of diplomacy and politics, and improving the quality of the lives of their families, communities, and nations;

Whereas discrimination continues to deny women full political and economic equality and is often the basis for violations of women’s basic human rights;

Whereas worldwide, the lives and health of women and girls continue to be endangered by violence that is directed at them simply because they are female;

Whereas worldwide, violence against women includes rape, genital mutilation, sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, honor killings, human trafficking, dowry-related violence, female infanticide, sex-selection abortion, forced pregnancy, forced sterilization, and forced abortion;

Whereas the World Health Organization asserts that domestic violence causes more deaths and disability among women aged 15 to 44 than cancer, malaria, traffic accidents, and war;

Whereas worldwide, 130,000,000 girls and young women have been subjected to female genital mutilation;

Whereas worldwide, at least 1 in 3 females has been beaten or sexually abused in her lifetime;

Whereas worldwide, 20 to 50 percent of women experience some degree of domestic violence during marriage;

Whereas 1 in 4 women in the United States have been raped or physically assaulted by an intimate partner at some point in their lives;

Whereas somewhere in the United States, a woman is battered, usually by her partner, every 15 seconds;

Whereas more than 3 women are murdered by their husbands or boyfriends in the United States every day;

Whereas battering is the leading cause of injury to women aged 15 to 44 in the United States;

Whereas it is estimated that 1 in 5 adolescent girls in the United States becomes a victim of physical or sexual abuse, or both, in a dating relationship;

Whereas worldwide, women account for  $\frac{1}{2}$  of all cases of HIV/AIDS, and in Africa, young women are 3 times more likely to contract the virus than men;

Whereas worldwide, sexual violence, including marital rape, has been denounced as a major cause of the rapid spread of HIV/AIDS among women;

Whereas between 75 and 80 percent of the world's millions of refugees are women and children;

Whereas illegal trafficking worldwide for forced labor, domestic servitude, and sexual exploitation involves between 1,000,000 and 2,000,000 women and children each year, of whom approximately 50,000 are transported to the United States;

Whereas  $\frac{2}{3}$  of the world's nearly 1,000,000,000 illiterate individuals are women;

Whereas  $\frac{2}{3}$  of the children denied primary education are girls;

Whereas these educational failures have serious consequences for the global economy and the United States national security, as well as for tens of millions of girls who are losing the chance to discover their worth and importance as global citizens;

Whereas girls who are educated are more likely to have healthy and stable families, lower mortality rates, higher nutrition levels, and delayed sexual activity, and have less chance of contracting HIV/AIDS or having unwanted pregnancies;

Whereas in most countries, women work approximately 2 times more unpaid time than men do;

Whereas women work  $\frac{2}{3}$  of the world's working hours and produce  $\frac{1}{2}$  of the world's food, yet earn only 10 percent of the world's income and own less than 1 percent of the world's property;

Whereas 3 in 10 households are maintained by women with no husband present;

Whereas rural women produce more than 55 percent of all food grown in developing countries;

Whereas it is estimated that women and girls make up more than 70 percent of the poorest people in the world;

Whereas worldwide, women earn less, own less property, and have less access to education, employment, and health care than do men;

Whereas microcredit is a stunningly simple, inexpensive tool that can forever alter the economic landscape for the better;

Whereas women now make up 80 percent of the world's 70,000,000 microcredit borrowers, and from India to Nicaragua to South Africa to Costa Rica, women are proving that small loans can transform individual lives, families, and entire communities;

Whereas nations should take steps to ensure the full participation and representation of women in political conferences, committees, plenaries, and parliaments;

Whereas social investment, particularly investments in women and girls, should be an integral part of foreign policy;

Whereas despite extraordinary advances, women still comprise the majority of the world's poor, illiterate, and uneducated, remain under-compensated for the work they do, still do not have adequate access to medical care in

too many countries, are under-represented in leadership positions in government and business, and continue to be targeted for unspeakable atrocities in war and conflict;

Whereas March 8 has become known as International Women's Day for the last century, and is a day on which people, who are often divided by ethnicity, language, culture, and income, come together to celebrate a common struggle for women's equality, justice, and peace;

Whereas the dedication and successes of those working all over the world to end violence against women and girls and fighting for equality should be recognized; and

Whereas the people of the United States should be encouraged to participate in International Women's Day: Now, therefore be it

1       *Resolved*, That the Senate—

2               (1) designates March 8, 2005, as International  
3       Women's Day;

4               (2) reaffirms its commitment to—

5                   (A) improve women's access to quality  
6       health care, including HIV/AIDS prevention  
7       and treatment;

8                   (B) end and prevent violence against  
9       women, including the trafficking of women and  
10      girls worldwide, and ensure that the criminals  
11      who engage in these activities are brought to  
12      justice;

1           (C) end discrimination and increase the  
2 participation of women in decisionmaking posi-  
3 tions in government and the private sector;

4           (D) extend full economic opportunities to  
5 women, including access to microfinance and  
6 microenterprise; and

7           (E) strengthen the role of women as  
8 agents of peace because women are among the  
9 best emissaries for easing religious, racial, and  
10 ethnic tensions, crossing cultural divides, and  
11 reducing violence in areas of war and conflict;  
12 and

13       (3) encourages the people of the United States  
14 to observe “International Women’s Day” with ap-  
15 propriate programs and activities.

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